

July 2015

TOWN OF WHITECOURT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

ARTS AND CULTURAL CENTRE BUSINESS PLAN

A. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Town of Whitecourt, Alberta, a community of 10,572 residents, with a surrounding population of an additional 3,000 people, is a growing, dynamic community located 180 km northwest of Edmonton. The Town of Whitecourt, in partnership with Woodlands County, has identified the goal of providing an Arts and Cultural Centre for the region.

Considerable research and community discussion has already occurred and an Arts and Culture Sub-Committee has been established. The Sub-Committee, consisting of representatives from Town and County Councils, Performing Arts Society, School Divisions, and the Community Services Advisory Board, have conducted community surveys, conducted open houses, toured other facilities, and obtained "order of magnitude" costs. The Committee has established the following potential project parameters:

1. There appears to be strong community support for the development of an Arts and Culture facility. Over 300 families participated in recent public surveys and community open houses. 81% of participants supported proposed facility concepts; and 74% of participants supported a tax increase to develop and operate a facility. This is consistent with results of a community survey completed in 2010.
2. Facility main components should include:
 - Full performing arts theatre with permanent seating for 600. This size has been considered as optimal for hosting a wide variety of major and minor events.
 - All theatre support amenities, including technical features, orchestra pit, and typical theatre requirements such as a "green" room, box office, dressing rooms, box office, management offices, etc.;
 - Large lobby/gallery area to accommodate receptions and meeting space;
 - Art display in lobby/gallery;
 - Program rooms;
 - Meeting rooms;
 - Multi-purpose room to accommodate 300 – 600;
 - Possible commercial kitchen;
 - Possible lease space for additional arts and cultural groups such as pottery.
3. Town and County Councils have recognized a capital cost in the \$20 - \$22 million range and have discussed funding strategies.
4. Town and County Councils have recognized that there is potential for ongoing operational costs.
5. Preliminary planning has identified a partnership and shared site with a new school (Grade 4 – 12) currently under design and approaching the tendering stage.

The project process is now at the stage in development where additional detailed information is required to assist with further decision making and community commitment.

B. SERVICES REQUIRED

Consulting services are hereby solicited to provide the following services:

Work with the Arts and Culture Sub-Committee to:

1. Develop and recommend a facility operating structure – example – a municipal facility, a Society operated facility, or other strategies.
2. Develop a detailed facility program plan: what types of events will be successful, how many dates per year can be achieved, what is the performing arts market in north/central Alberta, what is successful in other facilities.
3. Develop a detailed operating budget; including potential revenue, expenditures based upon the facility operating structure, and estimated surplus/deficit.
4. Provide facility self-sustaining operating strategies; including recommendations for long term sustainability and possible timelines to become self-sustaining (if determined feasible).
5. Further define building components, amenities, and features.
6. Review community support; provide recommendations for further community input.
7. Review and confirm “order of magnitude” capital costs.
8. Provide capital funding models and strategies.
9. Review potential community partnerships for operating and capital costs. Review and provide recommendations for criteria for selecting facility site locations.

C. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. A Performing Arts Society is active in the community and has been working towards building interest and support for performing arts and cultural events. Major concerts have been successful, and the group has sponsored a series of smaller events. The Society will provide a strong representation from the community to assist with consultant work.
2. A preliminary Facility Feasibility Study was completed in 2010. This document will be available for review.
3. Information presented at various open houses and joint Town/County Council meetings will be made available. The information summarizes public support and input; and reviews various financial implications such as possible debenture borrowing and tax implications.
4. Preliminary facility floor plans have been developed.

D. SELECTION PROCESS

1. Solicitation of firms through this "Request For Proposals" through general advertising and invitations.
2. Review of Proposals by Town of Whitecourt and Committee representatives.
3. Possible interview of short-listed firms.
4. Selection and negotiation of contract.

E. CRITERIA FOR SELECTION:

1. Past experience with similar projects.
2. Qualifications and experience of principle staff.
3. Qualifications and experience of proposed affiliated associates for specialized tasks, if required.
4. Proposed fee structure and estimated costs.
5. Proposed timelines to complete the project in a timely manner.
6. Ability to provide creativity and innovation.
7. References. Proponents are requested to provide references from three similar sized or types of projects completed within the previous five years.

Submitted proposals should address these factors.

F. REPORTING RESPONSIBILITY

The Town of Whitecourt has assigned the coordination of this project to:

Mr. Jay Granley
 Director, Community Services
 Town of Whitecourt
 Box 509, Whitecourt AB T7S 1N6
 jaygranley@whitecourt.ca

G. PROJECT TIMELINES

1. It is anticipated that the study period will commence in mid-August; with a completion date of mid-October, 2015.
2. It is expected that the contractor will complete the project in a timely manner.

H. PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS

Written proposals must be received at:

Town of Whitecourt
 Community Services Department
 Box 509
 5004 – 52 Avenue
 Whitecourt, AB T7S 1N6

Prior to 12:00 Noon, Monday, August 10, 2015.

E-mailed proposals will be accepted; provided a hard (paper) copy is submitted within 5 days.

I. CLOSING INFORMATION

1. The Town of Whitecourt is not liable for any costs or expenses or to reimburse or compensate the Proponents in any manner whatsoever or under any circumstances including, without limitation, in the event of rejection of all proposals or cancellation of the project.
2. The Town of Whitecourt reserves the right to request that any or all proponents clarify and make revisions to their proposal. The Town may chose to meet with one, several, or all proponents to discuss aspects of their proposal. The Town of Whitecourt is not obligated to seek clarification from any proponent with regard to any aspect of its proposal.
3. The Town is not bound to accept any proposal. Further, the Town reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal in whole or in part, waive any irregularities in the proposal process, and to discuss different or additional items to those included in this RFP, at its sole discretion. The Town may invalidate this RFP and may issue a second RFP at its sole discretion.

Thank you for your anticipated response.